

Message Text

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PAGE 01 NEW DE 10841 180809Z

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ACTION NEA-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 ARA-16 CIAE-00 DODE-00 NSAE-00 NSCE-00

SSO-00 USIE-00 INRE-00 PM-07 H-03 INR-10 L-03 NSC-10

PA-03 RSC-01 PRS-01 SPC-03 SS-15 ACDA-19 IO-13 OMB-01

DRC-01 /119 W

----- 120915

O 160851Z SEP 73

FM AMEMBASSY NEW DELHI

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 6804

USUN NEW YORK IMMEDIATE 1559

INFO AMCONSUL CALCUTTA IMMEDIATE

AMCONSUL BOMBAY

AMCONSUL MADRAS

C O N F I D E N T I A L NEW DELHI 10841

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS:

SUBJ: FONMIN AND PM COMMENT ON CHILE COUP

1. ALL-INDIAN CONGRESS COMMITTEE (AICC) ANNUAL SESSION DISCUSSION OF FOREIGN POLICY RESOLUTION SEPT 15 INCLUDED DEBATE ON OVERTHROW OF ALLENDE. ORIGINAL DRAFT RESOLUTION SUBMITTED TO AICC OMITTED ANY REFERENCE TO CHILE. SEVERAL MEMBERS OBJECTED. FONMIN SWARAN SINGH TOLD AICC HE JOINED IN ABHORING OVERTHROW OF DEMOCRATICALLY ELECTED GOVERNMENT OF DR ALLENDE, AGREED COUP WAS SETBACK TO DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN THAT PART OF WORLD, AND SAID INDIA WAS OPPOSED TO CHANGE OF GOVERNMENT ANYWHERE BY EXTRACONSTITUTIONAL AND MILITARY MEANS. NEVERTHELESS HE REFUSED TO AGREE TO INCLUDE REFERENCE TO COUP IN FORMAL RESOLUTION ON GROUNDS SOME THINGS BETTER SAID INFORMALLY AND THAT INDIA WOULD HAVE TO DEAL WITH NEW CHILEAN GOVERNMENT ON BASIS OF ESTABLISHED NORMS AND PRINCIPLES OF COEXISTENCE.

2. IN PH KANDHI'S SPEECH ON FOREIGN AND DOMESTIC POLITICAL POLICY TO SAME SESSION, HOWEVER, SHE FOCUSED SHARPLY ON CHILE
CONFIDENTIAL

CONFIDENTIAL

PAGE 02 NEW DE 10841 180809Z

AND ITS RELATIONSHIP TO INTERNAL INDIAN SITUATION. MRS GANDHI

EXPRESSED GREAT REGRET AT FATE OF DR ALLENDE, NOTING SHE HAD WELCOMED EMERGENCE OF HIS GOVERNMENT WITH ITS PLEDGE TO BRING ABOUT SOCIAL CHANGE THROUGH PEACEFUL AND DEMOCRATIC MEANS EVEN THOUGH ALLENDE WAS MARXIST AND SHE WAS NOT. SHE REBUKED INDIAN PRESS FOR REPORTING ALLENDE HAD COMMITTED SUICIDE WHEN, SHE SAID, IT WAS CLEAR HE MUST HAVE BEEN KILLED. EVEN "LEFTIST" PRESS HAD BEEN "TAKEN IN". SHE SAID IT WAS CLEAR ALLENDE WOULD NOT HAVE COMMITTED SUICIDE SINCE CASTRO HAD TOLD HER WHEN HE WAS HERE LAST WEEK THAT ALLENDE HAD ONCE SAID TO CASTRO HE WOULD FIGHT TO HIS LAST BREATH. (FYI. INDIAN PRESS SEPT 16 CARRIES STATEMENT BY MRS ALLENDE ACKNOWLEDGING HER HUSBAND DID COMMIT SUICIDE.) MRS GANDHI SAID OPPOSITION WITHIN CHILE WAS BEING AIDED AND ABETTED BY OUTSIDE FORCES WHICH WERE TAKING INTEREST IN DEVELOPMENTS IN THAT COUNTRY.

3. MRS GANDHI SAID DANGER OF EXTERNAL FORCES AND DOMESTIC ELEMENTS COLLUDING TOGETHER WAS COMMON TO ALL DEVELOPING COUNTRIES. SHE SAID SHE KNEW WHICH FOREIGN GOVERNMENTS HAD TAKEN AN ACTIVE INTEREST IN THE INDIAN ELECTIONS IN 1971 AND IN THE LEADERSHIP TRANSITION IN 1966. SHE OBSERVED THAT IT WAS INTERESTING TO SEE HOW SECTIONS OF INDIAN PUBLIC OPINION WHICH HAD PREVIOUSLY OPPOSED SINO-INDIAN RAPPROCHEMENT SUDDENLY CHANGED THEIR TUNE AFTER PRESIDENT NIXON'S VISIT TO PEKING, NOTING THAT SOME PEOPLE APPEARED TO READILY ACCEPT FOREIGN ASSESSMENTS. IN THE SAME CONTEXT, SHE THEN COMMENTED THAT SOME INDIANS FELT SHE WAS THE BIGGEST MENACE TO INDIA; "THE ONLY QUESTION IS HOW FAR THEY WOULD GO IN THEIR BID TO REMOVE ME."

4. COMMENT: FOCUS OF MRS GANDHI'S ARGUMENT CLEARLY HEARD BY ALL PRESENT AND PLAYED IN FRONT PAGE HEADLINES BY VIRTUALLY ALL DELHI NEWSPAPERS SEPT 16: "PM WARNS AGAINST DIVISIVE TACTICS OF EXTERNAL FORCES", "PM WARNS OF EXTERNAL INTERFERENCE", "VESTED INTERESTS MIGHT TAKE CUE FROM CHILE", "PM WARNS OF SUBVERSION DANGER TO INDIAN POLICY". THIS REPRESENTS FIRST TIME IN LAST SIX MONTHS THAT PM HAS LASHED OUT ON THEME OF FOREIGN SUBVERSION AND FIRST TIME SINCE MAY THAT ISSUE HAS BEEN BROACHED IN ANY PROMINENT PUBLIC FORUM BY CONGRESS LEADER. TEMPTATION TO TAR DOMESTIC OPPOSITION WITH CHILEAN BRUSH APPARENTLY TOO GREAT FOR MRS GANDHI TO RESIST AT CONGRESS SESSION.

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PAGE 03 NEW DE 10841 180809Z

5. SWARAN SINGH'S CARE IN SEEING THAT FORMAL AICC RESOLUTION DOES NOT CONTAIN SUCH ALLEGATIONS SUGGESTS THAT INDIAN REP AT UNSC MEETING SEPT 17 WILL BE GUARDED IN HIS COMMENTS. ALTHOUGH HE MAY HOLD OUT POSSIBILITY OF SOME UNNAMED FOREIGN COLLUSION WITH CHILEAN COUP LEADERS, IT DOES NOT SEEM LIKELY TO US THAT INDIA WILL JOIN IN ANY DIRECT RPT DIRECT CRITICISM OF US. WE ARE CONCERNED, HOWEVER, THAT MRS GANDHI MAY NOW HAVE

REOPENED DOOR TO TYPE OF INDIRECT SNIPING AT US WHICH WAS
PUT UNDER WRAPS LAST SPRING. WE WILL WATCH WITH CARE FOR
WHAT COMES NEXT.
SCHNEIDER

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Message Attributes

Automatic Decaptioning: X
Capture Date: 01 JAN 1994
Channel Indicators: n/a
Current Classification: UNCLASSIFIED
Concepts: GOVERNMENT OVERTHROW, POLITICAL PARTIES, FOREIGN POLICY POSITION
Control Number: n/a
Copy: SINGLE
Draft Date: 16 SEP 1973
Decaption Date: 01 JAN 1960
Decaption Note:
Disposition Action: RELEASED
Disposition Approved on Date:
Disposition Authority: elyme
Disposition Case Number: n/a
Disposition Comment: 25 YEAR REVIEW
Disposition Date: 28 MAY 2004
Disposition Event:
Disposition History: n/a
Disposition Reason:
Disposition Remarks:
Document Number: 1973NEWDE10841
Document Source: CORE
Document Unique ID: 00
Drafter: n/a
Enclosure: n/a
Executive Order: GS SCHNEIDER
Errors: N/A
Film Number: n/a
From: NEW DELHI
Handling Restrictions: n/a
Image Path:
ISecure: 1
Legacy Key: link1973/newtext/t19730931/aaaaawuc.tel
Line Count: 119
Locator: TEXT ON-LINE
Office: ACTION NEA
Original Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Original Handling Restrictions: n/a
Original Previous Classification: n/a
Original Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Page Count: 3
Previous Channel Indicators:
Previous Classification: CONFIDENTIAL
Previous Handling Restrictions: n/a
Reference: n/a
Review Action: RELEASED, APPROVED
Review Authority: elyme
Review Comment: n/a
Review Content Flags:
Review Date: 19 DEC 2001
Review Event:
Review Exemptions: n/a
Review History: RELEASED <19-Dec-2001 by martinml>; APPROVED <10-Jan-2002 by elyme>
Review Markings:

Declassified/Released
US Department of State
EO Systematic Review
30 JUN 2005

Review Media Identifier:
Review Referrals: n/a
Review Release Date: n/a
Review Release Event: n/a
Review Transfer Date:
Review Withdrawn Fields: n/a
Secure: OPEN
Status: NATIVE
Subject: FONMIN AND PM COMMENT ON CHILE COUP
TAGS: PFOR, PINT, CI, IN, ALL-INDIAN CONGRESS COMMITTEE, AICC
To: STATE
Type: TE
Markings: Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 30 JUN 2005